DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 041 823 SP 004 064

AUTHOR Fowler, Dan E.
TITLE Experiential Innovations in Teaching Visiting Teachers.
PUB DATE 70
NOTE 9p.; Paper presented at the 1970 annual meeting of the American Personnel and Guidance Association Convention

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Emotionally Disturbed Children, *Graduates, Personal Growth, Race Relations, Racial Integration, Racial Recognition, Self Concept, Self Esteem, *Sensitivity Training, Simulation, *Social Work, Summer Programs

ABSTRACT

This paper describes a 6-week summer course for 11 older graduates working as visiting teachers in nine Georgia counties, seeing many emotionally disturbed children and families. The course was intended to increase the self-awareness and self-confidence of the teachers, and the methods used included 1) Social System Simulation, with groups of five forming a simulated family; 2) Family Sculpturing, including discussion of the interaction between the family system and the community system; 3) Idea Development Laboratory, in which students bombarded each other with creative ideas; and 4) Encountertapes, ten audio tapes with instructions, including a number of sensitivity exercises. The group of five black and six white teachers felt that the encountertapes helped them to see the members of the other race as unique individuals for the first time, which would help them in their work with integrated caseloads. [Not available in hardcopy due to marginal legibility of original document.] (MBM)

ED041823

PROCESS WITH MICROFICHE AND PUBLISHER'S PRICES. MICROFICHE REPRODUCTION ONLY.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

"Experiential Innovations in Teaching Visiting Teachers"

by

Dan E. Fowler
Assistant Professor of Social Work

University Health Services
The University of Georgia

Paper Presented at the

1970 American Personnel and Guidance Association Convention

SP004064

"Experiential Innovations in Teaching Visiting Teachers"

This is a descriptive report of some exciting new ways to provide learning experiences for older graduate students. These particular eleven students, most of whom were in their mid-thirties or early forties, were visiting teachers from nine Georgia counties. Five of the class members were black and six were white. They were isolated professionally and were at various academic levels in working toward their six-year education certificates. This class met daily for two hours during six weeks this past summer in a graduate Social Work course entitled, "Casework Services to Families and Children".

Visiting teachers in Georgia see many emotionally disturbed children and families. The students in this class often did not believe in their own ability to maintain continuing helping relationships with their clients. Self confidence in their professional role was lacking. Most of them seemed to have minimum self-awareness in relation to clients. Therefore, the learning goals for this class were set as increasing self-awareness and self-confidence since these attributes are needed for helping relationships with clients.

Certainly the tapes' exercises speeded up the freedom for the members to speak out, assert themselves, and question me and each other quite openly. Because of the direct feedback with each other, the members were effectively functioning in a group, meeting their needs as well as those of others.

In the beginning, some resisted parts of certain tapes but they were encouraged to be open with their feelings of discomfort. They were assured that they would be given no grades during these tape sessions and they could become observers if desired. Most of the students positively coped with this abrupt change in the student role, probably the same as they would with other kinds of changes.

Some of the methods used that I will describe are: (1) Social System Simulation - This approach engages groups of five in forming a simulated family with role assignments (mother, father, child, aunt, etc.) and the group creating a script with events and problems. After approximately ten minutes of the ongoing family interaction the process is stopped and each member expresses how he feels about himself and others in his "family". These experiences then related to the real families that the students work with by group discussion. (2) Family Sculpturing - This is done by taking the above family and asking one member to position himself and the other family members in position as he sees the family members relating one to another. A live discussion follows in the group in terms of what they experienced in the family sculpture. Following this I have used sculpturing using network therapy. That is to have the family bring in to their group other people that are important in the community. This leads to discussion as to the interaction between the family system and the community system. (3) Idea Development Laboratory - The idea develop-

THE MARGINAL LEGIBILITY OF THIS PAGE IS DUE TO POOR ORIGINAL COPY. BETTER COPY WAS NOT AVAILABLE AT THE TIME OF FILMING. E.D.R.S.

vent laboratory is a modified brainstorming teaching method. The goal is to get small groups of students to bombard each other with creative ideas without any negative thinking. I asked the group to creat an ideal school system with a facilitating visiting teacher's role.

(4) Encountertapes - The "Encountertapes" were ten audio tapes with instructions, which included a number of sensitivity exercises. I became a group member during these leaderless one-and-one-half hour group sessions. During the last thirty minutes of the two-hour class sessions I led group discussions with the focus on how we can relate on conceptual levels to what we had learned from the experiential learning to helping roles with clients. Of course, I could not completely deny my role as the teacher during the sessions and there were several open discussions about my role change and what it meant to them.

Thorough explanations as to what the tapes would consist of were made before they began and the group chose to become involved in these experiences. Of course, group pressure limits free choice. Betty Berzon and Jerome Reisel worked on development of these "Encountertapes" which were the result of a ten-year research project on self-directed groups and the development of program materials for use by such groups, conducted at the Western Behavorial Sciences Institute of La Jolla, California. Because of the group's increased cohesiveness, their rather borderline professional identities were strengthened. At the end of the course they viewed themselves less as victims of the system and more as change agents.

THE MARGINAL LEGIBILITY OF THIS PAGE IS DUE TO POOR ORIGINAL COPY. BETTER COPY WAS NOT AVAILABLE AT THE TIME OF FILMING. E.D.R.S.

The following is a table showing what the group members learned in relation to their roles as helping people. Many of the tapes have no more than five to ten minutes of instructions. I have since used many of these creative exercises in group therapy and, when timed right, they have been most helpful.

TAPE (The following descriptions of the tapes are taken from the "Coordinator's Manual".)	REPORTED LEARNING
Session One - First Encounter Microlab Break-In - Group members stand in a circle and, one at a time, go around the circle, stopping in front of each person. They are asked to touch the person to "make contact" look directly at him, and tell him their impression of him. Rolling - With the group standing in a circle, each individual, in turn, goes to the center of the circle, relaxes as completely as he can and allows himself to be passed around by the other group members - literally putting himself in the hands of others.	Realization of how much anxiety occurred with clients upon their first contacts with visiting teachers. Importance of letting clients know, through feelings and actions, of interest and willingness to risk becoming involved in helping ways. Importance of honesty and trust in relationships with clients.
Session Two - Ground Rules The rule is first, to "tune in" to what is happening inside yourself and in the group and secondly, to "talk up" about it. Examples of tuned-in and tuned-out groups are presented on the tape. Group members then pair off to practice this kind of tuned-in interaction and later reassemble as a total group to discuss what has happened.	Importance of focusing on feelings of clients in the "here and now" interactions. Helpfulness of meeting clients face-to-face and showing interest in them.

THE MARGINAL LEGIBILITY OF THIS PAGE IS DUE TO POOR ORIGINAL COPY. BETTER COPY WAS NOT AVAILABLE AT THE TIME OF FILMING. E.D.R.S.

Session Three - Feedback

Facilitative and non-facilitative feedback are defined, and examples of each are given on the tape. Group members then practice giving and receiving facilitative feedback in "go around" experiences.

How clients might see visiting teachers' needs to have feedback between themselves and clients.

Session Four - Progress Report

Concepts in the first three sessions are reviewed on the tape, and group members are asked to discuss how they are doing relative to the ground rules using feedback, etc.

Need for visiting teachers to have feelings integrated with what they say. Importance of listening with the skills involved. Importance of trusting one's inner feelings toward the clients as to what would be more helpful to them.

Session Five - Secret Pooling

Group members are asked to write a personal secret anonymously on a slip of a paper. The slips are folded, scrambled and each person takes one. Taking turns, each group member then reads aloud the secret that he has drawn and tells how he thinks it would feel to have a secret like that. To ensure anonymity, paper and pencils of a uniform nature are provided.

Importance, in client-worker relationship, of willingness to show clients that visiting teachers do empathize with them. Need to be non-judgmental in relationships.

Session Six - Break Out

With group members standing in a circle, each individual in turn goes into the center. He is asked to deal with the circle of people as a problem that stands between him and his freedom. The instruction to the person in the center is to break out of the circle. The instruction to the other group members is to do everything they can to keep the person in the circle. Following the exercise, group members discuss what has happened and how they felt about it.

Need to identify different coping styles in clients and to be non-judgmental about them. Self-awareness also occurred in terms of their own coping styles.

THE MARGINAL LEGIBILITY OF THIS PAGE IS DUE TO POOR ORIGINAL COPY. BETTER COPY WAS NOT AVAILABLE AT THE TIME OF FILMING. E.D.R.S.

Session Seven - Descriptions

Participants are asked to describe the other group members metaphorically - as an animal, a piece of furniture, a car, etc, telling everything they can about what they are describing, including how they feel about it.

Self-awareness took place in terms of how others see them.

Session Eight - Strength Bombardment

Each group member takes a turn in which he spends three minutes telling the rest of the group about his strengths and five minutes listening to the group tell him what they see in him that is strong and good.

Building clients' strengths and how this helps in developing genuine trust and feelings of success on the clients' part. Valuable approach in working with groups. Difficulty of many clients in accepting genuine support.

Session Nine - Giving and Receiving

Participants are asked to select three people who have had the most trouble letting the other group members get close to them. Then, one at a time, these three people step into the center of the circle. The other group members take turns going to the person in the center and non-verbally expressing the positive feeling they have toward him. The person in the center is instructed to receive this expression without returning it - that is, to have an undiluted experience of receiving without giving back. After being in the center, anyone else who wishes to may take a turn there. Then the group members discuss what has happened and how they feel about it.

Various meanings of touch, what is signifies for each of us, what it might mean to clients. Importance of clients increasing self-esteem by seeing themselves as persons of value and being able to verbalize the same. Difficulties involved when clients are receiving help all the time. Importance of non-verbal communication was strongly experienced.

THE MARGINAL LEGIBILITY OF THIS PAGE IS DUE TO POOR ORIGINAL COPY. BETTER COPY WAS NOT AVAILABLE AT THE TIME OF FILMING. E.D.R.S.

Session Ten - Last Encounter Microlab

This session again involves a series of timed sessions with various activities. As in Session One, the group members do Impressions and Rolling, both of which are followed by discussions of what happened and how people felt about it. Opportunity is provided for participants to focus on how group members have changed during the Encountertape Program. It is then suggested that they use the rest of the session to take care of unfinished business and say good-bye to each other.

Need to help clients recognize and express their feelings about terminating relationships with visiting teachers. This should refer to other important relationships in clients' lives. Clients need to feel strong enough to carry on from those points.

An interesting aspect of the actualized openness is reflected by the groups' statements that the tapes helped them to see members of the other race as unique individuals for the first time. Some of their underlying feelings about those of the other race were identified as hampering them in their work with clients. This was a significant occurrence because most of them were working with integrated caseloads for the first time and their entire school systems were in the process of integrating.

Following are some remarks made by students in final written assessments of their experiences with the tapes. Their final grades were given before these assessments were made:

> "In a client-worker relationship it is important that I be able to feel with my client and focus on the here and now of the situation. Feelings come through much stronger when you really try and tune in."

THE MARGINAL LEGIBILITY OF THIS PAGE IS DUE TO POOR ORIGINAL COPY. BETTER COPY WAS NOT AVAILABLE AT THE TIME OF FILMING. E.D.R.S.

"As a member of the group I was able to see the picture I portrayed to others through the feedback I received. Many pictures I did not like, because I, as others, had already painted a self-portrait exhibiting the many facets I saw of myself. Though I did not like what some people saw, I became so much more aware of how my clients might see me at times and how the picture I paint for them might somehow clog our process of communication. This part of the sessions meant a great deal to me."

"I felt good when my strengths were bombarded. I'm not sure the rest of the members felt the same way. My ego was as big as the University of Georgia when I left the session".

"I would recommend that these sensitivity tapes be used with similar groups from the School of Social Work and the Visiting Teacher Program".

"In all sincerity I can say that this class was unlike any I have ever had before. Although there were no formal lectures and no note-taking, I truly believe I will carry more with me than any class I've ever had".

THE MARGINAL LEGIBILITY OF THIS PAGE IS DUE TO POOR ORIGINAL COPY. BETTER COPY WAS NOT AVAILABLE AT THE TIME OF FILMING. E.D.R.S.